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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Governmental
and Public Affairs

Program Aid
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Services Available Through the U.S. Department of Agriculture

484

Agency Abbreviations

| | |
|---|-------|
| Agricultural Cooperative Service | ACS |
| Agricultural Marketing Service | AMS |
| Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service | ASCS |
| Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service | APHIS |
| Commodity Credit Corporation | CCC |
| Economic Research Service | ERS |
| Extension Service | ES |
| Farmers Home Administration | FmHA |
| Federal Crop Insurance Corporation | FCIC |
| Federal Grain Inspection Service | FGIS |
| Food and Nutrition Service | FNS |
| Food Safety and Inspection Service | FSIS |
| Foreign Agricultural Service | FAS |
| Forest Service | FS |
| Governmental and Public Affairs, Office of | GPA |
| Packers and Stockyards Administration | P&SA |
| Rural Electrification Administration | REA |
| Rural Telephone Bank | RTB |
| Science and Education | S&E |
| Soil Conservation Service | SCS |
| Statistical Reporting Service | SRS |
| Transportation, Office of | OT |

Program Abbreviations

| | |
|---|------|
| Agricultural Conservation Program | ACP |
| Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act | PACA |
| Rural Clean Water Program | RCWP |

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Introduction

Services Available Through the U.S. Department of Agriculture

This directory lists services and programs of the United States Department of Agriculture. It explains what these services and programs do and where and how to obtain them.

Although headquartered in Washington, D.C., USDA agencies operate program offices in counties throughout the United States.

Eligibility for participation in all programs administered by the Department of Agriculture is established by law without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, or religion. If you feel you have been denied the benefits of any USDA program on any of these grounds, write directly to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

USDA Services are a Story of Federal, State and Local Cooperation

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) conducts the programs in this directory in cooperation with State and local governments to provide more efficient, direct, and appropriate service benefits to the public. Some cooperative programs involve grants. Others provide only an exchange of information. Regulatory, consumer protection, food, and marketing services and other functions—are frequently performed by State personnel operating under Federal technical supervision. Where cooperative working arrangements are not involved, arrangements still exist to cover USDA activities that supplement, parallel, or directly affect work performed by State and local governments. Arrangements between State and local governments and USDA frequently must be tailored to meet special situations.

The Office of Intergovernmental Affairs in Governmental and Public Affairs provides information on programs involving Federal-State-local efforts.

Any responsible party can use this office to bring matters of intergovernmental concern to the attention of USDA officials. This office also works with State legislators and State officials involving agricultural issues of national interest, such as resources and conservation, rural housing and development, agricultural regulation, and consumer protection.

To contact this office, write to: Director, Intergovernmental Affairs, Office of Governmental and Public Affairs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Farms

Agricultural Conservation Program

Purpose

To cost-share with eligible producers the cost of pollution abatement and soil, water, and forestry practices of long-term community and public benefit.

How USDA Can Help

Farmers, ranchers, and private nonindustrial forest landowners may apply for cost-sharing assistance in carrying out approved practices by filing a request with the county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation (ASC) committee before work is begun. Technicians from the Soil Conservation Service, or the State forestry agency are available to assist the producer or contractor in planning and performing the work of installing conservation measures using funds authorized by Congress and allocated to ASC committees. The Government pays up to 75 percent of the cost of most needed conservation practices.

Who May Apply

Any farmer, rancher, or private nonindustrial forest landowner, (whether owner, landlord, tenant, or sharecropper) who bears part of the cost of an approved practice.

Where to Apply

Local ASCS offices, usually located in the county seat.

Agricultural Estimates and Forecasts

Purpose

To help farmers and others associated with Agriculture have reliable and objective estimates and other statistical information and forecasts about crop and livestock production, stocks, marketing, and prices paid and received by producers, farm income and expenses, natural resources, and foreign trade.

How USDA Can Help

The Statistical Reporting Service's agricultural estimates and reports are published at scheduled times and are available to the public. Releases provide current data of agricultural activity in each State and nationally. Analysis and forecasts on commodities, farm income, food prices, farm real estate, financial conditions, marketings, and the status of rural America are also published as scheduled by the Economic Research Service.

The Foreign Agricultural Service publishes estimates and other information on world production and trade in agricultural products.

Where to Apply

State offices of the Statistical Reporting Service, or Administrator, Statistical Reporting Service, U.S. Depart-

ment of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250; or Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250; or Administrator, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Federal Crop Insurance

Purpose

To provide producers with crop insurance protection against crop investment loss due to natural disasters.

How USDA Can Help

Crop insurance covers unavoidable losses due to adverse weather conditions as well as insect infestation, plant disease, wildlife damage, fire, earthquake and volcano. It spreads the risks from natural hazards across insured farmers in many geographical areas over many years. Crop insurance offers a farmer a specific yield guarantee and price election. It allows producers to maximize the use of capital (increasing borrowing and repayment power), to backstop forward contracting and hedging, and to enhance family security.

Who May Apply

Anyone can insure their share of an insurable crop that is produced on insurable land. This includes owner-operators, tenants, renters, crop-share landlords, partnerships, corporations, and estates.

Where to Apply

Crop insurance policies are available through insurance agents in local communities. County offices for the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service can provide information about policies and how to contact agents. The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation maintains 18 Field Operations Offices around the country which can provide complete information. They are listed in telephone directories under "Federal Government" or "U.S. Department of Agriculture."

Loans to Farmers

Purpose

To strengthen family farming by providing credit for family farmers who cannot get sufficient loan funds at reasonable rates and terms from commercial lenders.

How USDA Can Help

The Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) makes loans and guarantees up to 90 percent of loans by private lenders under its major farm loan programs: farm ownership, farm operating, emergency disaster, and economic emergency loans.

Other FmHA farm loan programs are for Indian land acquisition, grazing associations, recreation enterprises, soil and water conservation, irrigation and drainage,

and youth loans for income-producing projects for rural youth in supervised programs.

Farm ownership loans are made to buy, enlarge, and improve farms, refinance debts, and establish small business to supplement farm income.

Farm operating loans finance annual production expenses such as feed, fertilizer, and livestock and capital goods such as machinery and equipment.

Emergency disaster loans are made to farmers in areas hit by natural disaster such as drought, floods, and blizzards. Eligible areas are designated by the President, or Secretary of Agriculture. Farmers may borrow to recover actual production losses.

Economic emergency loans are available from FmHA to farmers who face a shortage of credit from regular credit sources or who are particularly hard-hit by high production costs and low prices for their crops and livestock. The loans may be made directly by FmHA or by commercial lenders with guarantees from the agency. The program has been extended to mid-November 1984.

Who May Apply

Farmers and ranchers who operate or plan to start a family size farm.

Farm operators may be individuals, partnerships, cooperatives, or corporations. Aquaculture operators may apply, also.

Where to Apply

For loans by FmHA—County FmHA office serving the area where the farm is located.

For guaranteed loans—a local lender located in or serving the area where the farm is located.

Protection from Animal Pests and Diseases

Purpose

To assist States and producers in controlling or eradicating animal pests and diseases that cause serious losses.

How USDA Can Help

When the need arises to conduct a program to control or eradicate an animal pest or disease, the States and industry concerned request the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to cooperate with them in an organized campaign. Specific measures are established, such as State and Federal quarantines, vaccination, or destruction of diseased or exposed animals. Objectives may be either control or eradication. APHIS shares responsibilities for technical knowledge, equip-

ment, personnel, and funds with the States and industries involved.

Who May Apply

Livestock or poultry producers and State governments.

Where to Apply

Producers may contact their State or Federal veterinarians. State governments may contact the Deputy Administrator for Veterinary Services, APHIS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Soil and Farmland Protection Programs

Purpose

To provide soils information and other data needed by farmers and ranchers and by rural and suburban communities to guide their choice in land-use and natural and natural resource improvement.

How USDA Can Help

Soil surveys, made by the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in cooperation with State experiment stations and other local agencies, are used to identify the most suitable lands to develop or maintain in crops, pasture and range, forest, recreation, urban and other uses. Soil maps can help in identifying the extent of flood-prone areas, and sources of sediment and other water pollutants. Local and regional planners can use soil maps to identify areas suitable for waste disposal fields, highways, campsites, and golf courses. Information about soil behavior helps prevent major mistakes in land-use and unnecessary costs to the land-user and the community.

Soil maps suitable for both farm and nonfarm planning are available for many counties. Several States have appropriated funds to accelerate soil surveys, and some State agencies publish maps and reports made by SCS for planning agencies. SCS also produces useful maps of prime and other important farmlands as well as information on potential cropland, and helps determine if land to be surface mined is prime farmland and how to properly reclaim it.

SCS also gives advisory assistance in developing public facilities and locating rural industries.

Through a cooperative Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) program, SCS aids local planning officials in fitting soils information together with many other factors that influence local decisions on shifting agricultural land to other use. The LESA process helps match natural resources with social and economic concerns as well as community needs to assure best uses of those resources.

SCS also helps State and local governments and private organizations develop programs for protecting agricultural lands.

Forest Service assists in land-use planning by providing specialized expertise and forest inventory and related information to planning organizations.

Who May Apply

Any individual or public or private organization.

Where to Apply

State or local offices of the Soil Conservation Service or Forest Service, or write to Chief, Soil Conservation Service, USDA, P.O. Box 2890, Washington, D.C. 20013; or Chief, Forest Service, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Soil and Water Conservation

Purpose

To help individuals, groups, and units of government conserve and improve natural resources. To help comes mainly through conservation districts, which are local units of State government.

How USDA Can Help

Soil Conservation Service provides the technical services of professional conservationists to help plan and apply soil and water conservation measures, especially for reducing soil erosion, conserving water, and preventing flood damages in upstream areas. SCS also helps solve water quality problems on the farm or that occur elsewhere from farming activities.

Who May Apply

Owners and operators of private lands (farmers, ranchers, or land-users in a community) and units of State, county, and local governments.

Where to Apply

State and local offices of USDA's Soil Conservation Service.

Forest

Cooperative Forest Fire Control

Purpose

To provide permanent protection of non-Federal timberland, potential timberland, and certain nonforested watershed lands, and other rural lands, to the extent needed to hold fire damage below the level at which it would seriously interfere with expected yields of timber products and other public benefits from these lands.

How USDA Can Help

Non-Federal lands are provided fire protection by State forestry agencies and their cooperators. The Federal role is one of providing technical support and financial assistance to the States in their efforts. Acquisition and use of Federal excess property by State foresters for fire control use is also authorized. A State should receive not more than 50 percent of its current estimates cost of adequate fire protection. The distribution of allotments has the concurrence of the Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters. All non-Federal landowners are eligible for fire protection of their forest and watershed lands.

Who May Apply

State forestry agencies with fire control responsibilities for non-Federal forest and watershed lands.

Where to Apply

Contact a regional forester or area director of the USDA Forest Service, or write Cooperative Fire Protection Staff, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 2417, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Cooperative Forest Insect and Disease Management

Purpose

To reduce losses and damage caused by forest insects and diseases on all forest lands to levels commensurate with forest resources and other environmental values.

How USDA Can Help

USDA helps by providing technical and financial assistance in prevention, detection, evaluation, and suppression of forest insect and disease outbreaks on State and private lands. Technical assistance only is provided for insect and disease activities for wood in use, stored wood, wood products, and urban trees. (The program also has similar responsibilities on all Federal lands.) Technical and financial assistance on State and private forest lands is provided for under the Federal Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act. All suppression projects must meet specific criteria for Federal participation, such as being biologically feasible, environmentally acceptable and economically efficient.

Who May Apply

State Foresters or other equivalent State officials having responsibility for forest insect and disease management. Private landowners should apply direct to their State official.

Where to Apply

State officials should contact either the regional forester or an area director of the U.S. Forest Service of their State jurisdiction.

Cooperative Law Enforcement

Purpose

Through reimbursement, to cooperate with State or local units of government in strengthening law enforcement efforts directed at protecting the public and their property on National Forest System lands.

How USDA Can Help

Reimbursement may be used to support State and local law enforcement work to protect visitors and their property on National Forest lands covered in cooperative agreements. Lease or rental of specialized equipment needed to do the job may be included in the agreement. To qualify, the service must be above that normally provided by the cooperating agencies.

Who May Apply

State or local law enforcement agencies that have authority and responsibility to enforce State and local laws on lands within the National Forests.

Where to Apply

Contact any Forest Service regional office, National Forest supervisor, or the staff of a Ranger District office, or write to the Fiscal and Accounting Management Staff, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 2417, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Forestry Incentive Program

Purpose

To share the costs of installing forestry practices with nonindustrial private forest landowners having eligible lands in certain designated counties. The primary purpose of the program is to accelerate timber production, while preserving and enhancing other forest resources such as wildlife habitat, water quality, recreation, forage, and esthetics.

How USDA Can Help

Private landowners may apply for cost-share assistance under this program. A request for assistance must be filed with the county ASC committee. State forestry agency personnel are available to assist in planning and performing the work. Cost-sharing ranges up to 65 percent of the cost of the practice. Long-term agree-

Markets

ments are available in some States under this program. The Forest Service provides technical direction through the State foresters.

Who May Apply

Any nonindustrial private landowner who owns up to 1,000 acres of forest land (up to 5,000 acres, if approved by the Secretary of Agriculture) and is not regularly engaged in manufacturing forest products or providing public utilities services. Lands must be capable of producing a minimum of 50 cubic feet of wood per acre per year to be eligible.

Where to Apply

Local ASCS offices, usually located in the county seat.

Rural Forestry Assistance

Purpose

To assist in increasing timber inventories, improving and maintaining fish and wildlife habitat and providing other forest resources on non-Federal forest lands.

How USDA Can Help

The program provides technical, financial, and related assistance for non-Federal forest lands to State forestry agencies to:

- Develop genetically improved tree seeds.
- Procure, produce, and distribute tree seeds and trees. Provide technical information, advice, and related assistance to forest landowners, and managers, vendors, forest operators, wood processors, public agencies, and individuals regarding: management planning and silvicultural treatment of forest lands; protection and improvement of forest soil fertility and water yields; effects of forestry practices on fish and wildlife and their habitats; harvesting, processing, marketing, and utilization of wood and wood products; and conversion of wood to energy.

Who May Apply

State forestry agencies apply for Federal financial assistance. Nonindustrial private forest landowners and managers, forest operators, wood processors, public agencies and individuals may request technical assistance from State forestry agencies.

Where to Apply

Local Forest Service offices or Chief, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 2417, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Agricultural Fair Practices Act

Purpose

To protect farmers' rights to organize and to join cooperatives. The Act establishes standards of fair practices for handlers and processors who deal with farmers, and prohibits handlers from discriminating against farmers because they are members of a producer association.

How USDA Can Help

Agricultural Marketing Service handles producer complaints filed under the Act. In most cases where it appears the complaint has merit, the administrator requests a field investigation by USDA's Office of Inspector General. If the investigation reveals sufficient evidence that any handler has engaged in a practice prohibited by this law, the Secretary of Agriculture may request the Attorney General to bring civil action for injunctive relief from such practices.

Who May Apply

Agricultural producers who believe they have been discriminated against because of their membership in a cooperative or bargaining association may file complaints, which should state such details as the handler's name and address, when the violation occurred, and what the producer believes the handler has done that violates the law.

Where to Apply

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Educational Assistance to Production and Marketing Groups

Purpose

To provide educational and technical assistance, including the latest USDA land-grant university research findings, to agricultural production and marketing association, groups, and cooperatives.

How USDA Can Help

Through the USDA and land-grant university experiment station and Extension Service, research findings and educational assistance are provided in the analysis of new technology and in the conduct of feasibility studies, market analysis, and the development of new products and markets.

Who May Apply

Any agricultural production or marketing association, group, or cooperative.

Where to Apply

Local Cooperative Extension agent, State agricultural experiment station director, or Assistant Secretary for

Science and Education, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program

Purpose

To assist States in financing cooperative projects to solve marketing problems by improving the quality of farm products, marketing techniques, market development, and product promotion.

How USDA Can Help

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) provides State marketing agencies with funds, which must be matched by the State to carry out specifically approved marketing service projects. Although the main responsibility for program development rests with the States, AMS reviews and approves proposed projects; helps participating States plan their programs; gives counsel on particular problems; and works with farmers' marketing firms and State agencies to assist in carrying out projects.

Who May Apply

State Departments of Agriculture.

Where to Apply

Market Research and Development Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Federal-State Market News Services

Purpose

To provide producers, wholesalers, retailers, and others engaged in marketing food and farm products up-to-date information on prices, supplies, and market conditions to aid in equitable and efficient marketing.

How USDA Can Help

The Agricultural Marketing Service, in cooperation with State agencies, provides daily, weekly, or monthly reports for most food and farm products. Reports provide unbiased data on prices, supplies, movement, and condition of the market for livestock and meat; poultry and eggs; dairy products; fresh fruits, vegetables, and ornamental crops; grain and related products; cotton; tobacco; naval stores; edible nuts; and honey. Market news reporters, who are Federal or State employees, cover major markets and marketing areas throughout the country. Many offices provide round-the-clock information by automatic answering device.

Reports also are disseminated through newspapers, radio, and television. Printed market reports on most commodities can be obtained by mail for a subscription fee.

Who May Apply

Anyone with an interest in marketing, including those involved in production, processing, wholesaling, and retailing of farm products.

Where to Apply

Contact the Cotton; Dairy; Fruit and Vegetable; Poultry; Tobacco; or Livestock, Meat, Grain, and Seed Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250, or State Departments of Agriculture.

Food Certification Services

Purpose

To provide volume buyers of food commodities with certification and acceptance services to insure that their food purchases meet desired requirements.

How USDA Can Help

Agricultural Marketing Service specialists work with volume food buyers in developing tailor-made specifications for food commodities using specifications, grades, and standards. Buyers contract with their suppliers to have all deliveries examined by a USDA grader, and officially "certified" or "accepted" as meeting their specifications. Purchases are then examined by USDA before delivery to insure that specifications are met and each product or sealed package is stamped accordingly.

Who May Apply

Any processor, wholesaler, retailer, hospital, restaurant, governmental agency, educational institution, airline, or other public or private group buying food in large quantities.

Where to Apply

The nearest grading office of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service. Or, contact the appropriate commodity division of AMS in Washington, D.C. For poultry, eggs, and egg products, contact the Poultry Division (Phone: 202/447-3271); for dairy products, the Dairy Division (202/447-3171); for meat and meat products; the Livestock Division (202/382-1113); and for fruits and vegetables, Fruit and Vegetable Division (202/447-5870 for fresh products and 202/447-4693 for processed products). The headquarters address for each of these divisions is Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Grading Services

Purpose

To provide producers, packers, processors, shippers, wholesalers, retailers, and consumers official certification of the quality of food and farm products, to aid in marketing or establishing the market value of products.

How USDA Can Help

Two agencies of USDA, often in cooperation with State agencies, offer official grading or inspection for quality of food and farm products at producing or shipping points and at terminal markets. Commodities and grading agencies are: (1) Manufactured dairy products, poultry and eggs, meat, fresh and processed fruits and vegetables, cotton, tobacco, naval stores, livestock, and wool—Agricultural Marketing Service. (2) Grain and related commodities such as dry beans, peas and lentils—Federal Grain Inspection Service.

For most commodities, a fee is charged to cover the cost of the service. Users of the service may contract for official grading during packing or processing, or request grading of specific lots of a product in warehouses, railcars, barges, or other locations. The official grading or inspection certificate is accepted as *prima facie* evidence in court. The official grade name or USDA grade shield may be used on wholesale lots of products that have been officially graded and, in appropriate instances, on the retail product.

Grading is usually based on U.S. grade standards developed by USDA for these products.

Who May Apply

Anyone with a financial interest in the products.

Where to Apply

Depending on specific commodities as listed by agencies above, to Agricultural Marketing Service, or Federal Grain Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Import Services for Agricultural and Related Products

Purpose

To help prevent the introduction of agricultural pests and diseases from foreign countries into the United States and to help exporters of U.S. agricultural products to meet requirements of foreign importers and to maintain their world markets.

How USDA Can Help

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service provides inspection and quarantine service at borders and ports of entry to prevent agricultural pests and disease from entering this country in baggage; cargoes; planes; ships; plants, animals, or their products; or straw, bedding, or related materials.

APHIS also provides certification for exporters or importers of restricted products, indicating that their products or animals meet required specifications. APHIS advises travelers about what products may be brought into the United States from foreign countries.

Who May Apply

Anyone who wishes to import plants and plant products, animal and animal products, or pet birds; those who wish to export plants, animals, or other agricultural products; and those who plan to travel in foreign countries.

Where to Apply

To export or import animals and birds, write in advance to Import-Export Staff Veterinary Services, APHIS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Federal Building, Hyattsville, MD 20782.

To export or import plants and plant materials, write in advance to Permit Unit, PPQ, APHIS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Federal Building, Hyattsville, MD 20782.

To obtain information on what travelers may bring back into the United States from foreign countries, write to Travelers' Tips, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Hyattsville, MD 20782.

Export Assistance for Agricultural Products

Purpose

To help U.S. exporters sell in foreign markets.

How USDA Can Help

FAS offers private U.S. companies and cooperatives a variety of programs to help them export their products. These include 10 to 15 overseas food shows yearly for U.S. participants; a computerized Trade Opportunity Referral Service, which directs foreign buyer requests for U.S. agricultural products to appropriate U.S. suppliers; CONTACTS, a listing of new products offered for sale by U.S. companies, which is distributed in foreign markets; label testing to see if product labels meet foreign requirements; an export credit program for specified products; and an export incentive program, in which FAS shares the cost of overseas promotion of brand items in new markets.

Who May Apply

Any business firm or other entity that wants to get into the export business or improve its exports performance.

Where to Apply

For more information, contact: Director, Export Programs Division, Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. (202)447-6343.

Marketing Orders

Purpose

To enable farmers to work together, in cooperation with the Secretary of Agriculture, in developing programs to regulate the marketing of their commodities in a more orderly manner.

How USDA Can Help

The Agricultural Marketing Service assists farmers in organizing and planning marketing order programs for commodities specifically authorized by Federal law. The Secretary of Agriculture issues regulations that carry out purposes of the law.

For commodities other than milk, a marketing order may do one or more of the following: adjust the quantity of products marketed; provide for the orderly disposition of surpluses; encourage commodity inspection; standardize containers and packs; prevent unfair trading practices; and finance research and development projects, including advertising and promotion.

Regulations to apply under these orders are recommended by administrative committees made up of producers, growers, and handlers, nominated by the industry and appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture.

For milk, a Federal marketing order achieves market stability through the establishment of minimum prices to producers, based on current conditions of supply and demand, the equalization of returns to producers, the verification of weight and uses, and a program of market information. A milk order applies to a defined marketing area and is administered by a local administrator appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Who May Apply

Any cooperative, farm organization or other group representing farmers or handlers.

Where to Apply

Dairy Division or Fruit and Vegetable Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Packers and Stockyards Program

Purpose

To regulate business practices in the livestock, poultry, and meat industries.

How USDA Can Help

Packers and stockyards program specialists work closely with producers and trade organizations to maintain fair and open competition in the marketing of livestock, poultry, and meat and to assure financial protection to livestock producers.

Through the Packers and Stockyards Program, USDA investigates complaints and, in case of violation, may file an administrative complaint or recommend actions to the U.S. Department of Justice in Federal district court to achieve compliance.

Who May Apply

Anyone who believes that a violation of the Packers and Stockyards Act has occurred.

Where to Apply

Administrator, Packers and Stockyards Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250; (202)447-70511, or any P&S Regional Office.

Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA)

Purpose

To prohibit unfair trading practices among buyers and sellers in the produce business.

How USDA Can Help

The Agricultural Marketing Service furnishes advice to growers, shippers, and buyers concerning produce marketing transactions, advising on rights and responsibilities under the PACA. Unfair trading practice complaints in marketing of fruits and vegetables are handled by PACA specialists who try to bring parties together for informal settlements of disputes. Licenses can be suspended and revoked for violation of the Act.

Who May Apply

Everyone involved in buying and selling fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables in interstate or foreign commerce, or having a financial interest in such transaction, is eligible for advice or to file complaints under the Act.

Everyone who trades interstate in fresh or frozen fruits or vegetables must apply for an annual license, except for growers marketing only their own crops and certain retailers and certain frozen food selling brokers.

Where to Apply

Regulatory Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250, (202)447-4180 or 3212; or branch offices located at (1) Linder Bldg., Room 520, 845 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, Calif. 90017; (213)688-3195; (2) 610 South Canal Street, Room 1119, Chicago, IL 60607, (312)353-6220; (3) 26 Federal Plaza, Room 1641, New York, NY 10007, (212)264-1118; or (4) 819 Taylor Street, 9C03, Fort Worth, TX 76102, (817)334-2624.

Wholesale Market Development

Purpose

To assess the need for new or additional agricultural marketing facilities and to plan improvements in facility design, layout, location, equipment, and operational procedure. Emphasis is focused on development of wholesale food distribution centers and farmers' markets.

Communities

How USDA Can Help

Studies are conducted in cooperation with State and local governments, with university research and extension programs, and with private firms or trade organizations. Studies may deal with the development of improved wholesale market facilities or distribution centers in metropolitan areas as well as the development of new or improved marketing facilities for farmers, processors, and shippers in agricultural producing areas.

Who May Apply

City, county, and State government agencies responsible for development planning in areas with food and agricultural marketing facilities.

Where to Apply

Market Research and Development Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250; (202) 447-3075.

Community Educational, Organizational, and Technical Assistance

The Cooperative Extension Service provides educational, organizational, and technical assistance to communities and organizations to develop human, economic, and community resources to full potential.

Human development programs emphasize planning and action for improving the knowledge and skills of people, including education and training, through full use of educational, institutional, and organizational resources. Rural development programs are directed at developing new business and industry or expanding existing ones to increase income and employment opportunities; improving community services and facilities, and cultural and living environments; and increasing citizen participation in community decisions.

Comprehensive and Community Facilities

Purpose

To provide the areawide planning background needed to improve and effectively use existing resources for economic expansion.

How USDA Can Help

Data and resource maps, based on soil and water appraisals under the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act, and other SCS, ASCS, and Forest Service technical information are basic to such planning.

SCS provides soil, water-resource, engineering, and other kinds of surveys and provides technical assistance in planning resource use, development and conservation. Science and Education supplies information on techniques and facilities for processing farm products and industrial use of agricultural commodities. S&E also gives direct assistance to communities and other groups in planning complete project proposals in the field of agribusiness, in evaluating projects at request of funding agencies, and in establishing and operating agribusiness facilities.

S&E also helps local communities plan marketing facilities, such as wholesale food distribution centers, farmers markets, packing sheds, terminal markets, and livestock auction markets. The Forest Service provides forest inventory for the Nation's forest land, natural resource information for National Forests, forestry research, and specialized technical assistance in planning forest and related resource use, development, and conservation.

Who May Apply

The appropriate authorized community officials.

Where to Apply

To the SCS field office nearest the community making the request or to the Chief, Soil Conservation Service, P.O. Box 2890, Washington, D.C. 20013, or Director, Science and Education, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Emergency Assistance after Natural Disasters

Purpose

To inform victims of available assistance when disaster occurs and to help them get such aid.

How USDA Can Help

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) coordinates Federal response following a disaster or emergency declared so by the President. USDA agencies work closely with FEMA during such times. The Department also provides assistance following natural disasters which are not severe enough to require a Presidential declaration, but which affect agriculture.

In the case of severe drought, flooding, or other natural disaster conditions, the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service may:

- Donate grain to the Interior Department and State agencies for wildlife.
- Cost-share with farmers and ranchers to solve new conservation problems caused by a natural disaster.
- Permit emergency grazing and harvesting on acreage conservation reserve following a loss of feed supply due to a natural disaster.
- Donate feed grain, along with Interior, to Indian tribes for livestock feeding under chronic disaster conditions.

The Farmers Home Administration may provide emergency loans to help farmers recover part of their actual losses. In major rural fires, the Forest Service can either make people and supplies available or can provide technical know-how on firefighting. When there are serious outbreaks of animal or crop disease or crop pests, specialists in the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service can help plan control measures.

SCS provides technical and financial help to install emergency measures to prevent soil erosion and retard runoff in watersheds that have been suddenly impaired by a natural disaster.

Purpose of SCS help is to correct conditions that may endanger lives and property, and to enable stream channels to handle runoff from another storm that could occur soon after the emergency.

Who May Apply

Governors, State welfare agencies, local governing bodies, farmers, and eligible rural residents.

Where to Apply

The Director for Intergovernmental Affairs coordinates natural disaster assistance and can provide information on USDA programs. Applications for assistance should be made to Food and Nutrition Service, Farmers Home Administration, Science and Education, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, or other appropriate USDA agencies, either at their local offices or at the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C. 20250.

Financing Community Facilities

Purpose

To provide adequate water and waste disposal systems, public buildings, equipment, and other essential community facilities in rural areas. Water and waste disposal systems can be funded in towns up to 10,000 population, and other facilities loans can be made in towns up to 20,000 population.

How USDA Can Help

Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) makes loans for water and waste disposal systems, fire trucks, buildings such as town halls, libraries, hospitals, and firehouses, and other essential buildings and equipment.

Borrowers must be public bodies or nonprofit corporations unable to get financing through private lenders.

FmHA can make grants for up to 75 percent of the development cost of water and waste disposal systems if needed to reduce user costs to a reasonable level.

FmHA also makes watershed and flood prevention loans to public bodies and Resource Conservation and Development Loans to public bodies and nonprofit corporations in areas designated by the Soil Conservation Service.

Who May Apply

Eligible public bodies or nonprofit corporations.

Where to Apply

Apply to the district office serving the area where the project is located.

Rural Community Fire Protection

Purpose

To protect lives and property by providing technical, financial, and other assistance to State foresters who, in turn, provide assistance in training, organizing, and equipping rural firefighting forces.

How USDA Can Help

Funds may be used on a project basis to organize and plan fire protection, to train firefighters in wildland, structural fire suppression, and fire prevention activities. Activities which are normal to rural fire organizations in the States are included in projects. Equipment obtained is to be used for firefighting. Also, in support of the program, excess military property is available on request to the State forester. Eligibility is limited to rural communities with populations under 10,000 which are unprotected or poorly protected.

Farmers Home Administration makes loans to public bodies and nonprofit corporations to finance firefighting facilities and equipment.

Who May Apply

State forestry agencies that negotiate agreements with rural communities.

Where to Apply

Contact State foresters.

Rural Electric and Telephone Loans

Purpose

To provide adequate and reliable electric and telephone service to people in rural areas by financing electric service and new or improved telephone service in rural areas.

How USDA Can Help

The Rural Electrification Administration (REA) assists electric and telephone organizations in obtaining the financing required to provide electric and telephone service in rural areas. REA makes loans and guarantees loans made by others to provide adequate electric service and to improve and extend telephone service in rural areas. Electric loans finance the construction and operation of electric distribution, transmission, and generation facilities to provide initial and continued electric service. Telephone loans finance telephone facilities including lines and modern exchanges.

REA loans bear interest at either a standard rate of 5 percent or a special rate of 2 percent interest according to criteria set forth in the Rural Electrification Act of 1936. Telephone loans are made under authority of an amendment to this law enacted in 1949.

Telephone loans are also made by the Rural Telephone Bank which uses the facilities and services of REA. Telephone Bank loans are made for the same purposes as loans made by REA but bear interest at a rate consistent with the Bank's cost of borrowing money.

All REA and Rural Telephone Bank loans are self-liquidating.

Who May Apply

Companies, cooperatives, and certain public authorities that qualify under the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 as amended.

Where to Apply

Write to the Administrator, Rural Electrification Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Rural Housing Loans

Purpose

To provide decent, safe, and sanitary housing and related facilities for rural residents unable to borrow elsewhere.

How USDA Can Help

Farmers Home Administration makes loans to build, buy, enlarge, repair, or rehabilitate single-family housing and building sites in open country, towns of up to 10,000 population, and certain specified towns of 10,000 to 20,000 population.

Low and moderate income applicants may apply for loans from FmHA. Low, moderate and above moderate income are defined periodically by FmHA; information on current limits may be obtained from the agency.

FmHA also makes loans for rural rental apartment housing, housing repair loans and grants for very low income families, and loans and grants for farm labor housing and self-help housing and sites.

The agency also provides interest and rent subsidies to low income and elderly borrowers and renters of FmHA-financed housing.

Who May Apply

Eligible or prospective residents of rural areas, plus (for rural rental housing) eligible individuals, cooperatives, corporations, and public bodies.

Where to Apply

For single-family home loans by FmHA—county FmHA office serving the county where the housing is or is to be located.

Consumers

For multiple-family rural rental housing—district FmHA office serving the county where the housing is to be located.

Urban Forestry Assistance

Purpose

To encourage States to plan and implement urban forestry programs.

How USDA Can Help

By providing financial, technical, and related assistance to plant, protect, maintain, and utilize wood from trees, in open spaces, green belts, roadside screens, parks, woodlands, curb areas, and residential developments in urban areas.

Who May Apply

State forestry agencies, other agencies, municipalities, counties, and organizations through State forestry agencies.

Where to Apply

Local Forest Service offices or Chief, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 2417, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Food Assistance

Purpose

To get food assistance to people who are unable to provide adequately for themselves.

How USDA Can Help

The Food and Nutrition Service, operating through State and local government agencies, administers programs that provide food stamps for low-income families; breakfast and lunch in public and nonprofit private schools, as well as public and licensed nonprofit private residential child care institutions; food services for pre-school children in day-care centers and similar away-from-home organized activities; meals to needy school-age children in summer recreation programs; selected nutritious foods to needy expectant mothers, new mothers, and infants and young children at home; donated foods for nonprofit summer camps and charitable institutions.

The family food assistance programs operate as follows:

Food Stamps—USDA increases the food-buying power of eligible low-income families by giving them a specified amount of food stamps to supplement their monthly food budget. The food stamps are spent for food the family chooses at retail stores.

Donated Foods—USDA buys a variety of nutritious foods and donates them to the States, for distribution to charitable institutions and food assistance programs for needy families on some Indian reservations. Donated foods also benefit day-care centers, schools, and victims of natural disasters and needy, expectant and nursing mothers as well as children up to 6 years old.

Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)—USDA makes funds available to participating agencies to provide specified nutritious food supplements to pregnant and nursing women, and to infants and children up to 5 years of age who are determined by competent professionals (physicians, nutritionists, nurses, and other health officials) to be at “nutritional risk” because of inadequate nutrition and inadequate income.

The child nutrition programs operate as follows:

School Lunch—Children in schools and institutions offering the National School Lunch Program may get nourishing lunches at modest cost. Children from needy families may receive their lunches free or at prices substantially lower than the normal rates. Federal contributions of food and cash make this possible.

School Breakfast—Breakfast is available to children in schools and institutions participating in the School Breakfast Program.

It is especially important in improving the diets of needy children who may receive breakfast free or at a reduced price.

Summer Food Program for Children—This program provides meals for children from low-income areas during extended school vacation. Participating public or private nonprofit school food authorities; local, municipal, county, or State governments; and public and private nonprofit residential camps serve meals free to attending children.

Child Care Food Program—Children attending year-round nonresidential child care facilities, child care centers, and day-care homes may receive up to three nutritious meals per day—breakfast, lunch or supper and a snack. USDA cash and food assistance is tied to the number of meals served and the relative need of the children.

Who May Apply

Individual applicants should contact their local public welfare agency for family food assistance—principally through the Food Stamp Program. It is available in every county and city in the United States.

County public agencies wishing to operate a WIC program in their area may contact their State health agency.

Schools and institutions may apply for the child nutrition programs described above to the State agency in the State capital.

Where to Apply

The State education agency in the State capital.

Meat and Poultry Inspection

Purpose

The Food Safety and Inspection Service administers the meat and poultry inspection program which assures consumers that meat and poultry sold in the United States or shipped abroad is safe, wholesome, and truthfully labeled.

How USDA Can Help

Under the Federal Meat Inspection Act and the Poultry Products Inspection Act, FSIS conducts mandatory inspection of all meat and poultry shipped in interstate and foreign commerce for use as human food. Included are processed products such as sausages, frozen dinners, canned meat, and soups made with meat and poultry, as well as raw meat and poultry. FSIS provides

continuous inspection at more than 7,000 plants in the United States and monitors inspection in foreign plants that export meat and poultry to the United States.

Inspection starts with approval of plans for a slaughtering or processing plant to make sure the facilities, equipment, and procedures are adequate to provide safe and sanitary operations. All livestock and poultry are inspected before slaughter, and inspection continues throughout the slaughtering process and at each step in processing, handling, packaging, and labeling. The agency also conducts the National Residue Program to control unsafe drug and chemical residues in meat and poultry.

Some States maintain their own inspection systems, which must be “at least equal to” the Federal system. Products inspected under State programs can be sold only within the State.

Who May Apply

Firms interested in slaughtering or processing meat and poultry products intended for human consumption may apply for inspection service and for approval of facilities plans and labels.

Where to Apply

Meat and Poultry Inspection Operations, Food Safety Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Business and Industry

Assistance to Rural Agricultural Processing Industries

Purpose

To help rural communities establish and operate agricultural processing plants suitable to the farm production, marketing opportunities, skills, and other resources of the particular area.

How USDA Can Help

Science and Education industrial specialists help community leaders evaluate the potential for an agricultural processing plant for a specified region. They help formulate feasibility studies to find suitable processing project plants and give technical assistance in the establishment and operation of agricultural processing plants. These specialists also act in a liaison capacity to find any needed additional services, know-how, financial support, and other assistance necessary for such an enterprise.

Who May Apply

Any responsible group representing a rural community.

Where to Apply

Assistant Secretary for Science and Education, U.S. Department Of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Commodity Storage under the U.S. Warehouse Act

Purpose

The U.S. Warehouse Act was passed by Congress in 1916 to improve this country's agricultural warehousing industry. The act authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to license public warehouse operators storing agricultural products. Warehouse operators who voluntarily apply and qualify are issued a license.

How USDA Can Help

Under the act, the Agricultural Marketing Service administers a voluntary Federal licensing, bonding, and examination program for warehouses storing agricultural commodities. Major objectives are to assure safe storage at reasonable rates, protect depositors, maintain the integrity of warehouse receipts issued for such products to assure their acceptability in the marketplace, and facilitate interstate commerce in the marketing of major agricultural products.

Who May Apply

Any person lawfully engaged in the business of storing cotton, grain, rice, dry beans, wool, tobacco, syrup, soybeans, nuts and/or cottonseed.

Where to Apply

Warehouse Service Branch, Warehouse Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA *located at:*

1718 Peachtree Road, N.W.

Room 202

Atlanta, Georgia 30309

(Covers the States of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida)

5610 Crawfordsville Road

Suite 1004

Indianapolis, Indiana 46224

(Covers the States of Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland)

167 North Main Street

Room 418

Memphis, Tennessee 38103

(Covers the States of Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi)

400 South 4th Street

Room 910

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415

(Covers the States of Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana)

106 South 15th Street

Room 810

Omaha, Nebraska 68102

(Covers the States of Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri)

101 South Main Street

Temple, Texas 76501

(Covers the States of New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas)

256 Carriage Square

Yuba City, California 95991

(Covers the States of Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington)

Financing Business and Industrial Development

Purpose

To improve the economics of rural areas by promoting development of businesses and industries providing nonfarm jobs.

How USDA Can Help

The Farmers Home Administration guarantees up to 90 percent of principal and interest of loans by private lenders for business and industry in open country and in towns of up to 50,000 population in nonmetropolitan areas.

Borrowers do not have to meet the test of being unable to get credit without a FmHA guarantee, since the main purpose of the Business and Industrial (B&I) loan program is to promote the economic development of rural areas.

B&I loans can finance a wide variety of business and industry, but there are some restrictions.

Who May Apply

An individual, corporation, or public body.

Where to Apply

For guaranteed loans and site grants—a local lender located in or serving the area or the district FmHA office serving the county where the project is located.

Programs to Help Cooperatives

Purpose

To help farmers and others in rural areas increase their income by improving the effectiveness of established and emerging cooperatives and to form new cooperatives to market, purchase, and obtain other services.

How USDA Can Help

The Agricultural Cooperative Service works with other Federal and State agencies in cooperative development activities described in other sections of this directory. Its staff conducts feasibility studies for expansion of service of established cooperatives and organization of new ones. Upon request, its staff works with cooperatives in defining and solving organization, operating, and management problems.

Who May Apply

Cooperatives officials and community groups interested in developing cooperatives.

Where to Apply

Administrator, Agricultural Cooperative Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250, or offices listed in the other sections offering various types of assistance to cooperatives.

Other Programs for Cooperatives

Purpose

The Foreign Agricultural Service works with cooperatives and other trade groups to expand exports through market development efforts, including exhibits at international trade fairs and promotion of trade centers. The Forest Service and the Agricultural Cooperative Service help existing forestry cooperatives and groups interested in forming them. The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service makes agricultural commodity price support available to producers through cooperatives. The Soil Conservation Service provides

technical assistance to local cooperatives and other groups in resource conservation and development areas.

Who May Apply

Cooperatives officials and community groups interested in developing cooperatives.

Where to Apply

County Extension Offices, State or Federal offices of USDA agencies mentioned; or Administrator, Agricultural Cooperative Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Transportation Services

Purpose

To bring about needed changes in freight services and rates for farm products and to provide assistance in solving major transportation issues important to farmers.

How USDA Can Help

The Office of Transportation serves as a focal point for all USDA transportation matters. Transportation specialists work closely with farmers, shippers, farm organizations, and Federal and State government agencies in negotiating with carriers. When necessary, OT files complaints or petitions and testifies in formal proceedings before Federal and State agencies that regulate transportation.

Who May Apply

Farmers, shippers, farm organizations, and local or State agencies.

Where to Apply

Office of Transportation, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Resources

Great Plains Conservation Program

Purpose

To Conserve and develop the Great Plains' soil and water resources, through helping land users apply conservation systems and shift highly erodible land to permanent grass cover.

How USDA Can Help

Technical assistance and cost-share funds under 3- to 10-year contracts are available to farmers, ranchers, and others in planning and installing resource management systems under a conservation plan for their land. Cost-share rates range up to 80 percent for the most urgently needed conservation work.

Who May Apply

Farmers and ranchers in designated counties in Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas, Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Where to Apply

Local Soil Conservation Service office serving the county in which the farm or ranch is located.

Protection from Plant Pests and Diseases

Purpose

To assist States and growers in controlling or eradicating plant pests and diseases that cause serious losses.

How USDA Can Help

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service maintains working agreements with the various States that outline the basis for entering into cooperative programs to control or eradicate serious plant pests or diseases. When the need for a program has been determined, specific measures are established such as State and Federal quarantines, pesticide spray programs, or the release of sterile insects to reduce pest populations. Objectives may be agreed upon that attempt eradication or that limit action to controlling the spread of pests and diseases. APHIS shares responsibilities with the States for technical knowledge, equipment, personnel, and funds.

Who May Apply

Plant producers and State governments.

Where to Apply

Producers through State Plant Regulatory Officials; State governments to Deputy Administrator for Plant Protection and Quarantine Programs, APHIS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Plant Variety Protection Act

Purpose

To legally protect the ownership rights of breeders of plants that reproduce through seeds.

How USDA Can Help

Agricultural Marketing Service examiners check for distinctiveness, uniformity, and stability to determine whether a new variety is, in fact, novel and entitled to protection against infringement. When entitled to protection, the originator is given a certificate that prohibits others from selling, exporting, or reproducing the variety of seed without authorization from the owner.

Who May Apply

Anyone who develops or owns a new plant variety.

Where to Apply

Plant Variety Protection Office, Livestock, Meat, Grain, and Seed Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Library, Beltsville, Maryland 20705.

Resource Conservation and Development Program

Purpose

To stimulate economic growth in multiconty areas through accelerated conservation activities and land-use adjustments.

How USDA Can Help

Federal participation includes technical planning assistance in preparing long-range development plans; technical assistance to help landowners install needed conservation measures; financial assistance to public bodies on certain approved conservation and development measures having community benefits; and credit to help landowners and local sponsors finance planned capital improvements of soil and water resources.

The Soil Conservation Service provides program leadership and financial and technical assistance. The Economic Research Service, Science and Education, and Forest Service assist within their authorities.

The Farmers Home Administration can make loans to public agencies and private nonprofit corporations to provide for natural resource conservation and development in designated areas, including loans to public bodies for water-based recreation facilities. Maximum period is 30 years with repayment of principal and interest deferred up to 5 years. Loans may not exceed \$500,000.

Who May Apply

Any legally qualified local group, such as a conservation district, local governing body, town, local or State agency, or public development corporation.

Where to Apply

State Conservationists, Soil Conservation Service, or write to Chief, Soil Conservation Service, P.O. Box 2890, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Rural Abandoned Mine Program

Purpose

This program's purpose is to protect the public health, welfare, safety, and property from extreme dangers, adverse effects, and environmental degradation caused by past surface mining for coal. The program helps eliminate safety hazards, protect property from landslides and floods, prevent sediment from covering agricultural lands or polluting water, and rehabilitate destroyed wildlife habitat. The damages and hazards must be the result of past mining where no continuing responsibility exists for reclaiming the land.

How USDA Can Help

The Soil Conservation Service helps participants develop reclamation plans for their land and provides long-term cost-sharing to install reclamation measures. Federal share of the costs ranges from 25 to 100 percent, depending on the acreage to be reclaimed, the proposed use, and whether the benefits are mainly on-site (private) or offsite (public). The greater the public benefits, the more the Government will pay. No single landowner may receive cost-sharing for reclaiming more than 320 acres.

Who May Apply

People in 29 eligible States who own or control non-Federal land that has been mined for coal and owners of land and water areas affected by abandoned coal mines. Areas must have been abandoned before August 3, 1977, and left unreclaimed or inadequately reclaimed.

Where to Apply

Local Soil Conservation Service offices serving the county in which the land is located.

Rural Clean Water Program (RCWP)

Purpose

To help rural landowners and operators reduce agricultural nonpoint source pollutants in order to improve water quality.

How USDA Can Help

To be eligible for USDA technical and financial assistance, a Rural Clean Water project area must have been approved by the Administrator, ASCS, and approved by the Secretary. It must have or be causing documented agricultural nonpoint source water quality problems. Within an authorized project, cost-sharing funds are provided for Best Management Practices (BMPs) that reduce the amount of pollutants entering a stream or lake or contain them at the source. Primarily production-oriented erosion control and flood control practices are not eligible. The Soil Conservation Service will help farmers develop a water quality plan for individual farms and coordinate the technical assistance. Cost-sharing contracts will be entered into by the participants and the county ASC Committee.

Who May Apply

Owners and operators of private lands whose land or activities in an approved project area contribute to the area's agricultural nonpoint source water quality problems and who have an approved water quality plan.

Where to Apply

County ASC office in the project area.

Small Watershed Projects

Purpose

To provide flood prevention, watershed protection, agricultural water management, recreation, municipal and industrial water supply, and fish and wildlife development. These are small "community size" projects, up to 250,000 acres, (a little less than 400 square miles). Some range down to about 3,000 acres, or 4-1/2 square miles.

How USDA Can Help

The Soil Conservation Service gives technical and financial aid to local sponsoring groups in planning and carrying out watershed projects. The Forest Service, working with the State Forestry agencies, helps plan and install forestry and related measures.

First, the local group contacts the nearest Soil Conservation Service office. Once an application has been approved by the State and the SCS State Conservationist, SCS helps the group prepare a watershed plan. The plan is then approved by the Secretary of Agriculture or, for larger projects, by the U.S. Congress.



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The Forest Service provides accelerated technical assistance to landowners through State foresters. This includes utilization and marketing assistance, management planning, and related resource advice.

The Federal Government through SCS pays: (a) All construction costs for flood prevention; (b) costs for engineering and other services allocated to flood prevention, agricultural water management, and public recreation or fish and wildlife development; (c) up to 50 percent of the construction cost for agricultural water management and public recreation or fish and wildlife development; (d) up to 50 percent of the costs for engineering and other installation services required for basic facilities for public recreation or fish and wildlife development; and (e) up to 50 percent of costs for land rights required for public recreation or fish and wildlife development. All other costs must be paid by the local organizations.

Organizations or public bodies may secure loans from the Farmers Home Administration to finance costs on watershed projects.

Who May Apply

Any State or legally qualified organization, such as soil and water conservation districts; municipalities; counties; watershed, flood-control, conservancy, drainage, irrigation, or other special-purpose districts; and irrigation and reservoir companies, water users' associations, or similar nonprofit organizations.

Where to Apply

Local Soil Conservation Service offices.

Water Bank Program

Purpose

To help preserve, restore, and improve inland fresh water and adjacent areas in designated migratory waterfowl nesting and breeding areas; preserve and improve wetlands; conserve surface waters; reduce runoff and soil, water, and wind erosion, as well as stream sedimentation; contribute to flood control, better water quality, and improved subsurface moisture; and promote comprehensive water management planning.

How USDA Can Help

The Soil Conservation Service provides planning and technical services. ASCS provides financial assistance.

Who May Apply

Persons in selected areas having eligible wetlands may enter into agreements with farmer-elected ASC committees.

Where to Apply

Local ASCS offices, usually located in the county seat.

Young Adult Conservation Corps Grants to States Purpose

The Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC) program provides year-round jobs for unemployed and out-of-school men and women between the ages of 16 and 23. They work on conservation jobs in national forests, national parks, fish hatcheries, wildlife refuges, and other public lands. The program is administered jointly by the Departments of Labor, Agriculture, and the Interior. The YACC has both residential camps and nonresidential work projects. Enrollees may participate in the program for a maximum of 12 months.

How USDA Can Help

Thirty percent of all the funds appropriated to carry out the YACC program are available for grants to the States each year. Grant funds are allocated based on the youth population of a State. State YACC programs consist of both residential and nonresidential projects.

Financial assistance is available for employment and work to be performed on projects affecting both Federal and non-Federal public lands and water, or projects limited to non-Federal public lands and waters. YACC grants do not require matching funds.

Who May Apply

All States and territories are eligible.

Where to Apply

A regional forester or area director of the USDA Forest Service; a State forester or director of Department of Natural Resources or Staff Director, Human Resources Programs, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 2417, Washington, D.C. 20013.



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